

# Aims of the Rural Movement

family life, and family life was stable on the land. In the city it was in danger of dissolution. Whatever happened, if the land was properly used it would always yield a living, but in the cities they had seen long lines of starving men, driven to despair by hunger, and such conditions as drove men to open revolt. The Rural Movement did not claim to have answers for all the problems of the rural population, but it would supply the means to solve all problems. If farmers united and used their intelligence they could diagnose and eventually solve their own problems.

The objects of the Rural Movement were: independent farming, co-operation, adequate rural education, and a revival of the farm home.

In the history of the world there had been three methods of farming—(1) specialised farming; (2) subsistence farming; and (3) independent farming, which was the solution to the problem in Australia.

First and foremost, the objective of the farming family should be to maintain itself, went on Mr. Santamaria. The homestead should not be a liability on the farm, so that whatever happened, security could always be there. The farmers should be in a position to meet their overhead expenses, and endeavour to produce an income by having as wide a variety as possible. Independent farming was the policy of the Rural Movement. Many objections had been raised against that policy. It would be said that they could hardly do these things with the colossal weight of debt they had over their heads; that they would not be able to produce sufficient food owing to small rainfall and other conditions. The figures he had given showed that the problem of debt could not be solved by ordinary means. It had to be solved as part of a national plan at which the movement aimed.

## MR. SANTAMARIA'S ADDRESS

(Continued from page 5)

The Catholic Rural Movement was already playing its part in trying to convince public authorities of the need of water conservation. One authority in Queensland—the man who built the Sydney Bridge—said that the whole of Central Queensland could be irrigated at the cost of £40,000,000. It was objected that it was impossible to raise that amount, but within the first six months of this war £160,000,000 was raised. Finally, they knew the urgent need of decentralisation, and if they could solve that problem so that more and more people would live in country towns, the family would be strengthened and would thus prove a greater asset to national life. But even if they could solve the problem by paying the farmers' debts and giving each man £1000 if they continued to maintain the methods of specialised farming they would be in exactly the same position in 25 years' time, and the nation could not afford to have a crisis every quarter of a century.

Passing on to the subject of co-operation, Mr. Santamaria said there were many forms of co-operation—producers, consumers, credit unions, etc. He gave the instance of an agricultural board whose dividends had risen from 4½ per cent. in one year to 7½ per cent. in the following year—their profits amounting to £200,000. If farmers had taken their destinies into their own hands they would have been spared many of their baffling financial problems. Co-operation would solve those problems. In some countries, such as Belgium, it had wrought tremendous good.

Developing the point of rural education, the speaker said that boys were trained for the life of the city and not for the life of the land. The boy and the girl who are to live on the land had to be trained for it, and the Catholic Rural Movement aimed to bring about a reform in that respect. The system was not altogether to blame. There were many schools which would have made experiments in rural education if parents had encouraged them to do so, but there were some parents who thought the rural school "too low for Johnny." Men who helped to create the ideas and the manners of the time might look down on farmers as just "cockies," but that was partly the fault of the farmers, because they had not upheld the dignity of their state. That pride in rural life had to be their objective.

Finally, went on Mr. Santamaria, they had the revival of the rural home. The French Farmers' Catholic Rural Society stated that man believed in the land because woman believed in it, and where women led, men followed. Many of our country homes had not had sufficient attention devoted to them. In many cases, money that could have been spent on the home was spent on something else. Many, it was true, did not have the means, but they had to put things in their right perspective, and give the women and children of the land a decent and attractive home.

Independent farming, co-operation, rural education, and the revival of the rural home—these were the four objectives of the movement, said the speaker. Co-operatives had failed because the men who went into them only looked for something to take out—not to give. He remembered an occasion when he was addressing a group of farmers in a town, and one who had prospered asked him why he talked to them of co-operation, saying, "You are only asking us to help a lot of failures." There was no human answer at all, but there was an argument more powerful than any human argument, which Christ had given in the Sermon on the Mount. The early Christians knew the answer, and by love they did not mean the kind that comes from Hollywood; they meant Christian charity which urged them to love one another in God and to help one another.

Mr. Santamaria continued: "I could appeal to you to take part in our movement because of the interest which would come to you; I could appeal because of your own self-interest, but I won't appeal to you because of that. I appeal because there is a sublime work to be done." As Dr. Henschke had pointed out, it was the same work which the Church had performed 2000 years ago, and if a few Christian men, by the example of good Christian lives, could solve the world's problems, then, Christian men could solve them to-day. When the National Catholic Rural Movement was founded two years ago, a sword was drawn and a fire was kindled; that sword would

not be sheathed; that fire would not be quenched until the last false idea had been cast into the darkness of its own destruction. The sword was in the shape of a cross. God said to the Emperor Constantine, when going into battle, "In this Sign thou shalt conquer." "We can, and we will," concluded Mr. Santamaria, "restore the country to Christ and Christ to the country."

## DELEGATES' DISCUSSION GROUPS

Following the opening of the conference and afternoon tea, delegates formed discussion groups, the leaders of which gave the results of group discussions on the address of Mr. Santamaria. In the evening films provided by the National Catholic Rural Movement and the Department of Agriculture were shown in the college theatre.

On the Monday, Mr. H. J. Finnis, secretary of the Royal Agricultural Society, spoke on rural education and the establishment of young farmers' clubs and junior agricultural bureaux. His lecture was followed by group discussions and the presentation and discussion of views at a general meeting of delegates.

In the evening the Chief Adviser to the State Department of Agriculture (Mr. R. C. Scott) spoke on "The Services Available from the Department of Agriculture in Improving Farm Methods in Different Districts in the State." Group discussions followed the reading of the paper.

On Tuesday, delegates visited the Waite Research Institute. In the afternoon, Mr. Santamaria spoke on "The Organisation and Work of Rural Groups."

His Lordship Bishop Henschke, who presided at the conference, brought the event to a close with a memorable address on "The Spirit of the Rural Movement."

Pontifical Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament was given in the college chapel at 5 p.m.

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Scene from the historical play, "St. Agnes," which will be presented by the St. Ignatius' Operatic Society, at St. Ignatius' Theatre, Richmond, for a three nights' season commencing Tuesday, September 30. His Grace the Archbishop will attend the opening performance. Incidental music will be played by a special orchestra, under the conductorship of Mr. Leo Collins, L.R.S.M. (London). Box plan at Ashley and Egan's, 278 Church-street, Richmond. Tickets, 4/- and 3/- reserved, and 2/- unreserved.

## Retreats for Men and Boys

### "LOYOLA"

The Clifton Hill and the Preston Young Christian Workers combined for the retreat at "Lo-yola" during the week-end. Mr. Ray O'Neill, president of the Clifton Hill branch, organised one group, and Mr. Jim Cahir, president of the Preston branch, led the other.

The following retreats have been arranged:

September 27-29: Old Patricians.  
October 4-6: Heidelberg and East Kew parishes.  
October 11-13: Hawthorn parish.  
October 18-20: Old Paradians; Old boys, St. Patrick's, Verna.

### "LA VERNA"

Members of the Cathedral and Camberwell branches of the C.Y.M.S. combined with members of the Geelong Campanion Society to form the large group of men which made the retreat over the week-end at "La Verna."

The following retreats have been arranged:

September 27-29: Armadale and Es-sendon C.Y.M.S.  
October 4-6: Third Order of St. Francis.  
October 11-13: Lands Department.  
October 18-20: Camberwell H.N.S.

## Caritas Christi Hospice Fete

Of the noble work of "Caritas Christi" (the Hospice for the Dying), Kew, it is unnecessary to write in this journal. Readers are too familiar with it. But to direct attention to the needs of "Caritas Christi" it is at once our duty and privilege. An opportunity to aid these needs—one that all Catholics will grasp—is offered by the fete to be held in the grounds of "Caritas Christi" on Saturday afternoon, October 25, at 3 p.m., and to be opened by his Grace the Archbishop. The address of "Caritas Christi" is 102 Studley Park-road, Kew, E.4. Next door to "Raheen," it may be reached by buses from Johnston-street bridge and Princess-street.

The next meeting of the Professional Men's Sodality will take place on Friday, October 3, when Dr. N. B. Lewis will give an illustrated lecture, entitled "Colour Photography." Lady and gentlemen friends of the members are invited to be present.

The annual enclosed retreat for the sodality will take place at "Loyola," Watsonia, during the week-end, November 29-December 1.



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